

SECTION 17: PUBLIC INFORMATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

17.1 PUBLIC AWARENESS

The administrative authority informs the public of the air quality problems, the requirements of federal and state laws, the contribution of the motor vehicle emissions to the air quality problems, the need for and benefits of an I/M program, how to maintain a vehicle in a low-emission condition, how to find a qualified inspection facility, and the requirements of the I/M program. The aforementioned information is available on the Department website www.deq.louisiana.gov.

Each motorist that fails inspection receives a Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR) and an OBD brochure at the completion of inspection. The report presents a Pass/Fail status for each inspection item, the inspector's identification, station contact information, whether it was an initial test or retest, and a message for explanation of OBD failure. The OBD brochure further explains the OBD test as well as gives the Performance Warranty and the Design and Defect Warranty information. The two emission control warranties are:

- (1) Federal law requires that the emission control systems on 1995 and later MY vehicles be warranted for 2 years or 24,000 miles.
- (2) Federal law also requires that the on-board computer and the catalytic converter on 1995 and later MY vehicles be warranted for 8 years or 80,000 miles.

17.2 CONSUMER PROTECTION PROVISIONS

The administrative authority continues to institute procedures and mechanisms to protect the public from fraud and abuse by inspectors or others involved in the I/M program. Complaints received regarding the program from the public or others are thoroughly investigated. To protect motorists from fraudulent inspections, a Challenge Station is operated for motorists who wish to contest the results of an emissions inspection.

The Challenge Station is currently located at the Louisiana Technical College facility in Port Allen, Louisiana. These retests at the Challenge Station are conducted at no additional cost. If a challenged emission inspection test passes the re-test at the Challenge Station, the technician

contacts the MVI Station where the initial test failure originated to reserve a passing sticker for that specific vehicle. The motorist can then return to that original station and have the passing sticker affixed, at no additional cost.